

such tests on veterans of the 1991 gulf war has handicapped researchers.

Blood is always taken for HIV testing, Kilpatrick said, and those samples are in storage. But fresh samples will be taken only if the serum on file is more than a year old, he said.

He disputed the idea that additional sampling would be helpful because the biological markers of many toxic agents disappear from the bloodstream within hours or days of exposure.

Also, Kilpatrick said, troops are physically evaluated every five years, except for pilots, who are tested more frequently. Medical histories were more valuable to researchers than "hands-on" physical exams, he said.

But gulf war medical researchers said the Pentagon's plan is a missed opportunity, especially considering the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

"We can run into the same thing all over again," said Lea Steele, a Kansas Institute of Health epidemiologist who has studied gulf war veterans. "One of the difficulties of the gulf war was we didn't have any evidence prior to the war. It was hard to link illnesses."

"Now that we're becoming a second time deeply involved in Iraq . . . there is no established protocol that would be very valuable. Some people say Saddam Hussein has less to lose now. He may be more likely to use these things."

#### A TRIBUTE TO JAMES W. LAUGHLIN

#### HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 24, 2003*

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to James W. Laughlin—one of our Federal Government's finest public servants and a long time resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This March he will retire from an exceptionally distinguished career of service to his country. He has served our Nation as a career civil servant for over 42 years. He has been an exceptional leader and has played a key role in ensuring effective financial management for the Department of Defense. It gives me pride to have the opportunity to honor him today for his tremendous accomplishments.

Mr. Laughlin began his career with the Navy in the financial management field working for various field activities. He progressed to a supervisory budget analyst in the Office of the Navy Comptroller where he was responsible for the Navy's operation and maintenance and civilian manpower programs. In 1974 he transitioned to the Office of the Department of Defense Comptroller.

Mr. Laughlin first served in the Department of Defense Comptroller office as a budget analyst in the Research and Development Directorate, responsible for reviewing the Navy and Air Force multi-billion dollar aircraft programs. He then moved to the Military Personnel Directorate where he was responsible for reviewing the Navy and Marine Corps military personnel appropriations.

Since 1982, Mr. Laughlin has been the senior budget analyst for Military Personnel appropriation matters—a portfolio that totals over \$93 billion this year. Mr. Laughlin is an acknowledged expert on Military Personnel funding issues both inside the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill, particularly in the areas of concurrent receipt, military wage credits, and retired pay issues.

Senior leaders, both in the Congress and the Department of Defense, have benefited from his experience, outstanding leadership and distinguished performance. His efforts have enabled our nation's leaders to make the most effective use of defense resources to en-

sure America's military strength. On behalf of my colleagues, I thank him for his service to our country and wish him well on his retirement.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 24, 2003*

Mr. MIKE ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on the legislative day of Thursday, March 20, 2003, the House voted on H. Con. Res. 104, expressing support and appreciation for our Armed Forces and the President participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom. On House rollcall vote No. 83, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

#### COMMENDING CALIFORNIA WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE IN HONOR OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

#### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 24, 2003*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the California Women for Agriculture as they honor National Agriculture Day. The California Women for agriculture is hosting Agriculture Day in LA! at Moor Field in Alhambra, California on March 21, 2003 to commemorate this day.

In its 30th year, the National Agriculture Day program is committed to increasing public awareness about American agriculture. Producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies, and countless others across America will gather on this first day of spring to celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. National Agriculture Day focuses on educating Americans about career opportunities available in the agriculture, food, and fiber industry.

As one of California's major organizations, California Women for Agriculture helps to "supply knowledge and skills necessary to convey the mutual benefits of a vibrant agricultural economy and healthy rural communities to those who are in positions to impact the future of agriculture in California." California Women in Agriculture, along with the Agricultural Awareness and Literacy Foundation and Alhambra School District, will be hosting the event for 1,200 inner city 3rd grade students who will be learning about food, fiber, flowers, and forests. The goal of the program is to teach students about agriculture and its importance in our everyday lives. The students will participate in a hands-on learning environment with crops, farm equipment, and live animals. They will learn how it contributes to our healthy, affordable food supply; offers many different careers, cares for the environment and creates a diverse food supply.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to commend California Women for Agriculture as they honor National Agriculture Day on its 30th Anniversary. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing the California Women for Agriculture many years of continued success.

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION FOR THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES PARTICIPATING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

SPEECH OF

#### HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 20, 2003*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the men and women who wear the uniform and protect our freedoms. I rise on behalf of their families and loved ones who wait and pray for their speedy and safe return.

This is a solemn moment for the Nation. There has been disagreement here at home and abroad about the policies of preemption. The men and women who wear the uniform don't make policy. They are neither diplomats nor politicians. They are soldiers and their duty is to salute and follow orders. Every member of Congress joins in unwavering support of them and their families for their sacrifice.

I have openly disagreed with the policies that have led us to this moment. This evening we pause as a Congress to salute and honor our troops. And while I strongly disagree with the Administration's policies, this is not the resolution or forum to express my differences. This evening our hearts, our prayers, and our gratitude goes out to the uniformed members of the armed services. God bless them. God bless America.

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION FOR THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES PARTICIPATING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

SPEECH OF

#### HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 3, 2003*

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as we begin this arduous process of disarming Saddam Hussein of his weapons of mass destruction, I wish to thank our brave men and women in uniform for their service. Let us pray for their safe return to their homes and families.

During my career in the House, I've continually been struck by the dedication of those who wear this Nation's uniform. Prepared to offer the ultimate sacrifice, they serve for love of their country, for the safety of each one of us, and for the cause of freedom throughout the world.

The expertise and professionalism of our service men and women is without parallel. They understand the significance of their mission, and the dangers, but they will complete this task that has been laid before them.

Their mission is to disarm one of the greatest threats to the free and peaceful people of the world. The Iraqi people will no longer suffer from the horror of Saddam's regime. We must ensure our armed forces can complete this job knowing their country is fully behind their efforts.

God bless our brave men and women.